



**Public  
Prosecution  
Service**

Independent  
Fair  
Effective

# Annual Business Plan 2023-24

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Foreword by the Director</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Our Purpose and Values</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Organisation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Managing Change</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Key Issues for the Year Ahead</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Our Priorities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What We Plan to Achieve in 2023-24</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Key Delivery Measures</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PPS Resources</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Managing Risk</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Annex A: PPS Organisation Chart</b>	<b>26</b>

## Foreword

By the Director

I am pleased to present our Annual Business Plan for the 2023-24 financial year.

This document sets out our priorities as a Service and the milestones we will use to assess our progress.

One of the PPS's main priorities for the year ahead will be the establishment of the new joint Working Together Programme with police. Criminal Justice Inspection's recent review of file quality and disclosure has highlighted the need for the PPS and the Police Service of Northern Ireland to strengthen collaboration in order to improve the quality of prosecution files and speed of case progression. It is essential that greater quality is built into each stage of the process, enabling prosecutors to make timely decisions – and for both organisations to deal effectively with disclosure.



**Stephen Herron**  
**Director of Public**  
**Prosecutions for**  
**Northern Ireland**

The new Working Together Programme will be complemented by 'PPS 2030'. This is a longer-term strategy to develop a more modern, more efficient Public Prosecution Service that will target its resources to those areas of greatest priority and where we can add greatest value. The vision is built around a number of key themes, including: *effective processes* - reviewing our current procedures to identify areas for improvement; *proportionate processes* - implementing more proportionate ways to deal with cases to allow us to optimise our resources; *digital processes* - embracing digital ways of working to reimagine how we deliver our services, replacing inefficient paper-based activities; and *victim processes* - working with partners to enhance and extend the services we provide to victims, including proposals for an enhanced Needs Assessment Service.

PPS 2030 will be supported by a Modernisation and Project Management Office which I see as being crucial in managing change and ensuring the delivery of this long-term programme of work.

During the year ahead, we will continue to prioritise other key service improvement projects. This will include the rollout of the third phase of the Digital Evidence

Management Project in which multimedia evidence will be shared digitally with defence.

Recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic remains a key issue for the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland as we seek to respond collectively to its impact and the unavoidable backlogs that have accrued over the past three years. The latest data show that the volumes of criminal cases at court remain much higher than pre-pandemic, with the number of cases between first court appearance and disposal up by almost three-fifths when compared with March 2020. However, progress is being made and we are working closely with our partners to ensure that these backlogs, and the inevitable delay created by them, are addressed as quickly as resources will allow. We recognise that any additional delay will impact on victims and witnesses and I am grateful for the enormous patience and understanding we have seen as this important recovery work moves forward.

Overall, I accept that there is significant scope for improvement in our operational processes and our approach to working with partner agencies. I also accept that additional resource investment is not always required to implement these improvements, particularly given the opportunities offered by digital transformation. However, it must also be recognised that funding pressures severely restrict our ability to progress the prosecution of cases in as timely a manner as we would like. This is primarily a capacity issue which is linked to the changing nature of our workload over the last number of years. Despite overall file receipts from police reducing since 2015, the more serious and complex casework, in particular sexual offending and domestic abuse, has been increasing, often involving a much greater level of digital evidence. While police use of Non-Court Disposals has taken out many of the lower end Magistrates' Court cases, this is being replaced by case submissions that require much more prosecutorial input to process, even if that is ultimately in reaching a decision not to prosecute.

While we will continue to work closely with police and others to address delay, for example the amount of time taken for files to be decision ready, if we do not have sufficient staff to allocate those cases to, then our scope for tackling the issue will be significantly reduced, particularly with the added pressures of Covid recovery. Our capacity to support wider criminal justice strategies, such as those aimed at tackling violence against women and girls, could also be undermined.

I should add that funding certainty, in the form of a multi-year settlement, is also crucial if we are to properly manage spending, deliver our business priorities and plan for the longer term.

Finally, I would like to thank all staff across the Service for the dedication they have shown in maintaining the delivery of an effective prosecution service. The PPS's accreditation under Investors in People is a clear sign of our ongoing commitment to staff development and the importance we place on providing relevant support, ensuring that the physical and mental well-being of staff is a primary consideration.

Looking ahead to the various challenges facing the organisation, and the action needed to effect improvements, the foundation for all of this is our people.



**Stephen Herron**  
**Director of Public Prosecutions**  
**for Northern Ireland**

**June 2023**

## Our Purpose

**We will provide an independent, fair and effective prosecution service for the people of Northern Ireland. We will act impartially and in the interests of justice at all times, applying the highest professional standards and treating everyone fairly and with respect.**

**We are at the heart of the criminal justice system and will work with partners to build a safer community in which we respect the law and each other. We will strive to deliver a modern, innovative and transparent service that shows compassion and understanding towards victims of crime while meeting our obligation to ensure fairness to all.**

## Our Values

### **Independence and Integrity**

We will maintain our independence and act at all times with integrity, fairness and impartiality. We will seek to deliver justice in every case in accordance with the law, respecting the human rights of all persons.

### **Openness and Honesty**

We will communicate openly and honestly, in accordance with our professional duties. We will set clear standards about the service the public can expect from us.

### **Respect**

We will respect each other, our colleagues and the public we serve, showing courtesy, sensitivity and understanding.

### **Excellence**

We will make the best use of our people and resources, seeking to achieve excellence in everything we do.

### **Partnership**

We will work in partnership within the criminal justice system to better serve the community

## Our Organisation

**The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) is the principal prosecuting authority in Northern Ireland. In addition to taking decisions as to prosecution in all cases initiated or investigated by the police, it also considers cases initiated or investigated by other statutory authorities, for example HM Revenue and Customs.**

The PPS was established in June 2005. The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 defines the PPS, its statutory duties and responsibilities, and the legislative framework within which it must provide its services.

Since the devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly in April 2010, the Service has been designated as a non-ministerial government department. Funding for the PPS is provided by the Northern Ireland Assembly and, as Accounting Officer for the Service, the Director is responsible for ensuring that the public monies provided are used efficiently. All staff, other than the Director and Deputy Director, are members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

### PPS Services

The primary role of the PPS is to reach decisions to prosecute or not to prosecute and to have responsibility for the conduct of criminal proceedings. Additional services are also available which have been designed to enhance the effectiveness of the Service, including the provision of prosecutorial and pre-charge advice.

Options are available to allow prosecutors to deal with offenders other than through prosecution. These include cautions, informed warnings and youth conferencing. Prosecutors may also refer offenders to the National Driver Alertness Course.

### PPS Structures

The PPS is a regionally based organisation. There are two regions:

- Belfast and Eastern; and
- Western and Southern.

Each region is headed by an Assistant Director (AD). The AD is responsible for working with the courts and the police to provide a high-quality prosecution service in their area. The regions deal with a wide range of cases, from the less serious

summary cases, which are heard in the Magistrates' Courts, through to more serious indictable cases which are heard in the Crown Court.

In addition there are four legal sections, based in PPS Headquarters, which are also headed at AD level. These sections are as follows:

- The Serious Crime Unit deals with a range of the most serious offences including murder, manslaughter, rape and other serious sexual offences, human trafficking, prostitution and related offences.
- Central Casework Section deals with some of the most high profile and difficult cases in Northern Ireland, including files relating to terrorism and organised crime.
- Fraud and Departmental Section deals with serious and complex fraud files submitted by the police, as well as files from Government Departments and agencies.
- High Court and International Section deals with a range of specialist legal matters, including High Court bail applications, restraint and confiscation orders, extradition, international letters of request, judicial reviews, appeals to the Court of Appeal and cases referred by the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Corporate Services provides the PPS with a variety of professional, technical and other support services, and includes the Policy and Information Unit, Victim and Witness Care Unit, Information and Communications Technology, Resource Management, Finance and Fees, Communications, Strategic Improvement Team and Property Management.

An Organisation Chart for the PPS is presented at **Annex A**.

### **Working in Partnership: Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland (CJSNI)**

The PPS works in partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS), the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI), the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), as part of the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland.

The Director is a member of the Criminal Justice Board which is chaired by the Minister of Justice. This was established by the Minister to improve engagement between the most senior leaders within the criminal justice system and to provide strategic oversight for the work of the CJSNI.



## Managing Change

### PPS 2030

'PPS 2030' provides a strategic vision for the future of the Public Prosecution Service, setting out a programme of work over the next 5-7 years to deliver a more efficient organisation that will target its resources to those areas of greatest priority and where greatest value can be added.

The overarching objectives of the programme are to:

- Redesign and optimise our service delivery model and processes to deliver our business more effectively;
- Develop arrangements to allow cases to be dealt with proportionately and contribute to the reduction of avoidable delay;
- Support staff and key stakeholders to work in a changing environment; and
- Achieve a sustainable financial operating model for the PPS in the long term.

Delivery of PPS 2030 will be through the identification of a portfolio of projects based around one or more of the following themes:

- *Effective Processes*  
We will review our practices and procedures to facilitate more effective decision making.
- *Proportionate Processes*  
We will implement more proportionate methods of handling casework in order to optimise the use of prosecutorial resources.
- *Digital Processes*  
We will enhance current digital ways of working in order to improve services and efficiency, both internally and in conjunction with our CJSNI partners.
- *Victim Processes*  
We will work with partners to improve information and services to victims and witnesses.

PPS 2030 supersedes the Service Improvement and Innovation Programme (SIIP). This was established by the Management Board in 2019 to provide a framework for the oversight and delivery of strategic CJSNI service improvement initiatives. With the advent of PPS 2030, tackling avoidable delay will remain a key objective for the Service and we will continue to engage in a range of criminal justice initiatives with the Department of Justice and other CJSNI partners. This includes the 'Speeding up Justice' Programme and the reforms set out in the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. Initiatives under this umbrella include Committal Reform and the achievement

of project objectives in respect of Direct Committal. An important step has already been taken with the abolition of oral evidence at the committal stage. The Service is also implementing the CJSNI Digital Strategy. This includes Phase 3 of the Digital Evidence Management Project where sharing of evidential material will be expanded during 2023-24 to include defence practitioners.

The delivery of PPS 2030 will require a dedicated resource in a number of key disciplines, particularly in relation to project management and business analysis. Therefore PPS will establish a Modernisation and Project Management Office in order to progress the delivery of this long-term programme of work. The team will coordinate the selection, prioritisation and control of modernisation projects throughout the PPS, utilising established project management techniques and practices.

Speeding Up Justice initiatives will continue to be supported by the Service's Strategic Improvement Team.

### **The Working Together Programme**

The recent review of file quality and disclosure by Criminal Justice Inspection NI (CJI) highlighted the need for the PPS and PSNI to strengthen their collaboration in order to improve the quality of prosecution files and the pace of case progression.<sup>1</sup>

While the inspection report recognised the progress made in recent years, for example via the Working Together Board, it is acknowledged that more needs to be done to address the issues highlighted by inspectors. Therefore the current PPS / PSNI working arrangements, including the Working Together Board, are to be reviewed with a view to major reform. This will involve the establishment of a new joint programme ('The Working Together Programme'), supported by a Board comprised of senior representatives from the two organisations.

A detailed specification for the new framework will be agreed and it is anticipated that there will be a number of project strands, focusing on areas such as file quality and timeliness, disclosure improvement, operational effectiveness and reducing demand. The new structures will be in place by autumn 2023, once the relevant priorities, governance structures and project leads have been agreed.

### **Strategic Improvement Board**

The Strategic Improvement Board (SIB), chaired by the Deputy Director, is responsible for the oversight of all major change initiatives taken forward by the PPS.

---

<sup>1</sup> *An Inspection of File Quality, Disclosure and Case Progression and Trial Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic (CJI, June 2023).*

With the commencement of PPS 2030 and the new Working Together Programme, as well as other ongoing initiatives, the SIB's role will be crucial as a main forum for the prioritisation and oversight of all project activity across the Service. This recognises the need to ensure that all new projects, regardless of their origins, are considered by senior management in the context of finite project management, policy, ICT and other resources within the organisation.

The Senior Assistant Director for Resources and Change and Senior Assistant Director for Serious Crime and Regional Prosecutions will act jointly as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the agreed suite of projects.

## Key Issues for the Year Ahead

Ahead of each annual business planning cycle, it is important that we assess our current operating context. As well as helping to plan for the year ahead, this allows us to focus on key priorities and to respond to any new opportunities and challenges, so that we can provide our managers and staff with the information and support they need. The summary below outlines a number of the key themes identified for the year, including the ongoing impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

This business plan should be regarded as a 'living document'. The PPS is operating in a very dynamic environment, and we must be willing to adapt as circumstances dictate. Therefore throughout 2023-24, the PPS Management Board will take regular opportunities to look ahead to identify emerging trends, so that our approach can be adjusted as necessary. In particular, there is a need to keep the financial situation under review as regards the organisation's capacity to meet our statutory obligations and business priorities.

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has presented the PPS and our partners across the CJSNI with very significant challenges. As a Service, we now have the ongoing challenge of addressing case backlogs at court, and the associated delay which inevitably built up over the pandemic period. Substantial progress has already been made in reducing backlogs, but much work remains to be done, particularly in the Crown Court. We will remain fully engaged in cross-criminal justice recovery activity over the next financial year. We will also continue to provide regular information and updates to victims and witnesses who are of course central to these efforts.

### Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

Domestic and sexual violence and abuse are among the most challenging crimes prosecuted by the PPS. Over the next year, we will build our capacity in this area, for example through the provision of additional training and guidance for prosecutors and ongoing quality assurance. The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act and the Protection from Stalking Act (implemented in February and April 2022 respectively), complemented by the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act 2022, represent a major step forward in terms of our ability to deal with domestic abuse, stalking cases and cases of non-fatal strangulation and asphyxiation. We will ensure that these provisions continue to operate effectively.

In respect of cases involving serious sexual offences, implementing the recommendations from the review carried out by Sir John Gillen remains a priority. This includes a new phase of the Remote Evidence Centre project in conjunction with the Department of Justice and other partners. Over the next year, we will also publish a new Policy for Prosecuting Sexual Offences and a joint Sexual Offences Strategy with police, setting out how we plan to enhance our practice in this key area. We will also provide support for the new strategies being developed elsewhere, including the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy led by the Department of Health and the Department of Justice, and the 'Equally Safe' Strategy, led by the Executive Office which aims to tackle violence against women and girls.

### **PPS Resources**

The PPS's budget position continues to be a difficult one. In particular, the demand-led nature of the PPS workload makes budgetary management difficult as the standard measures of reducing services or discontinuing activities are not readily available to senior management.

Details of the budget allocation for 2023-24 are set out at page 23. Delivery of the full range of PPS services, while also maintaining progress on recovery, will prove challenging within this allocation. We will seek to address these pressures as we move through the financial year.

### **New Ways of Working**

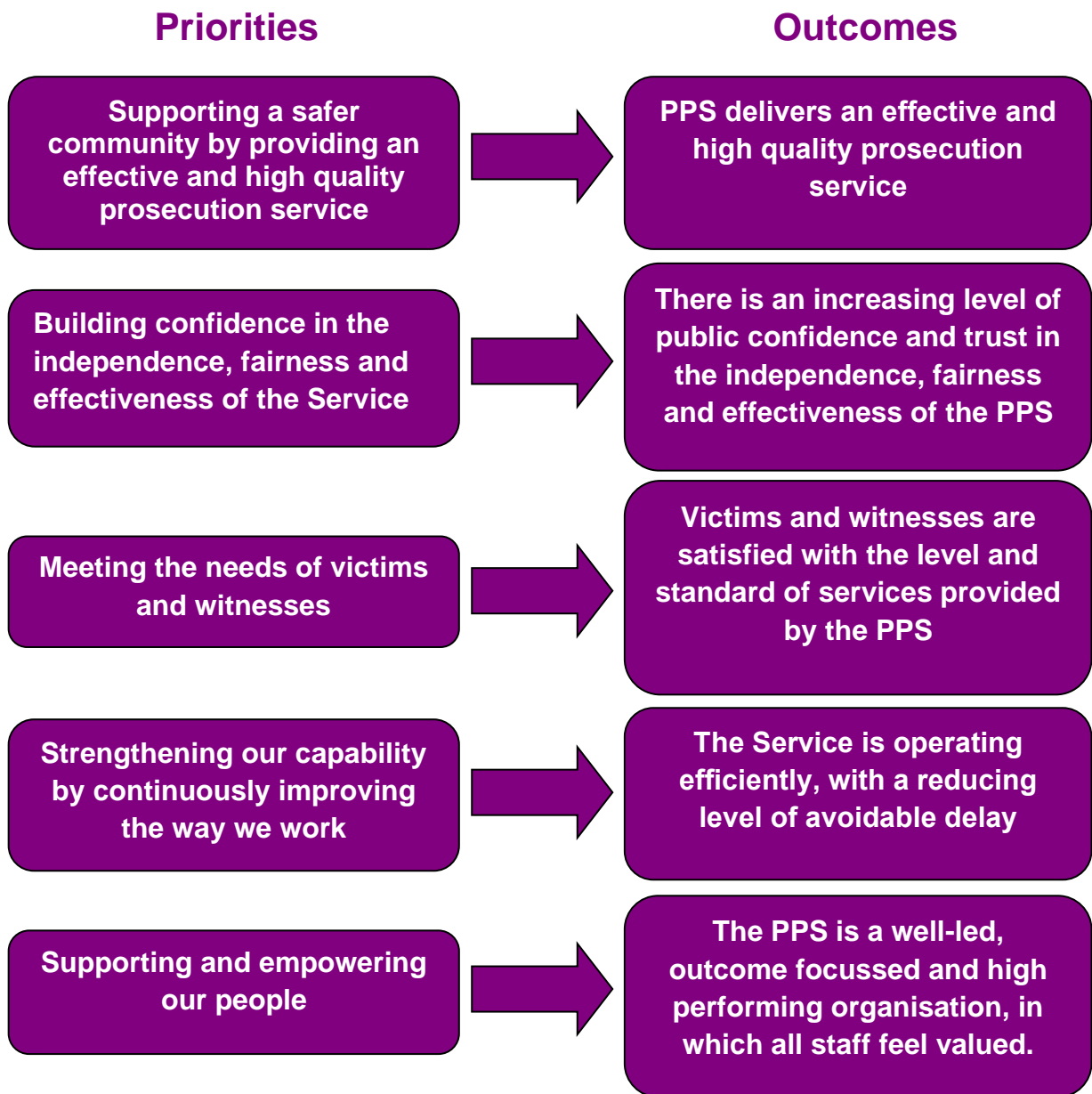
For most NICS staff the traditional workplace has now changed, with the introduction of greater flexibility and 'hybrid' working arrangements developed through the New Ways of Working Project.

During 2023-24, the PPS will evaluate the new working arrangements to ensure consistent practice. Our aim is to ensure that both service and employee needs continue to be met.

# Our Priorities

PPS corporate planning is based around five strategic priorities which act as a framework to drive our planning outcomes and our approach to managing performance and risk.

Our approach includes an Outcomes-based Accountability (OBA) element. The NICS is committed to embedding the OBA approach and the PPS hopes to enhance this aspect of our planning framework over the next year as we develop the PPS 2030 programme.

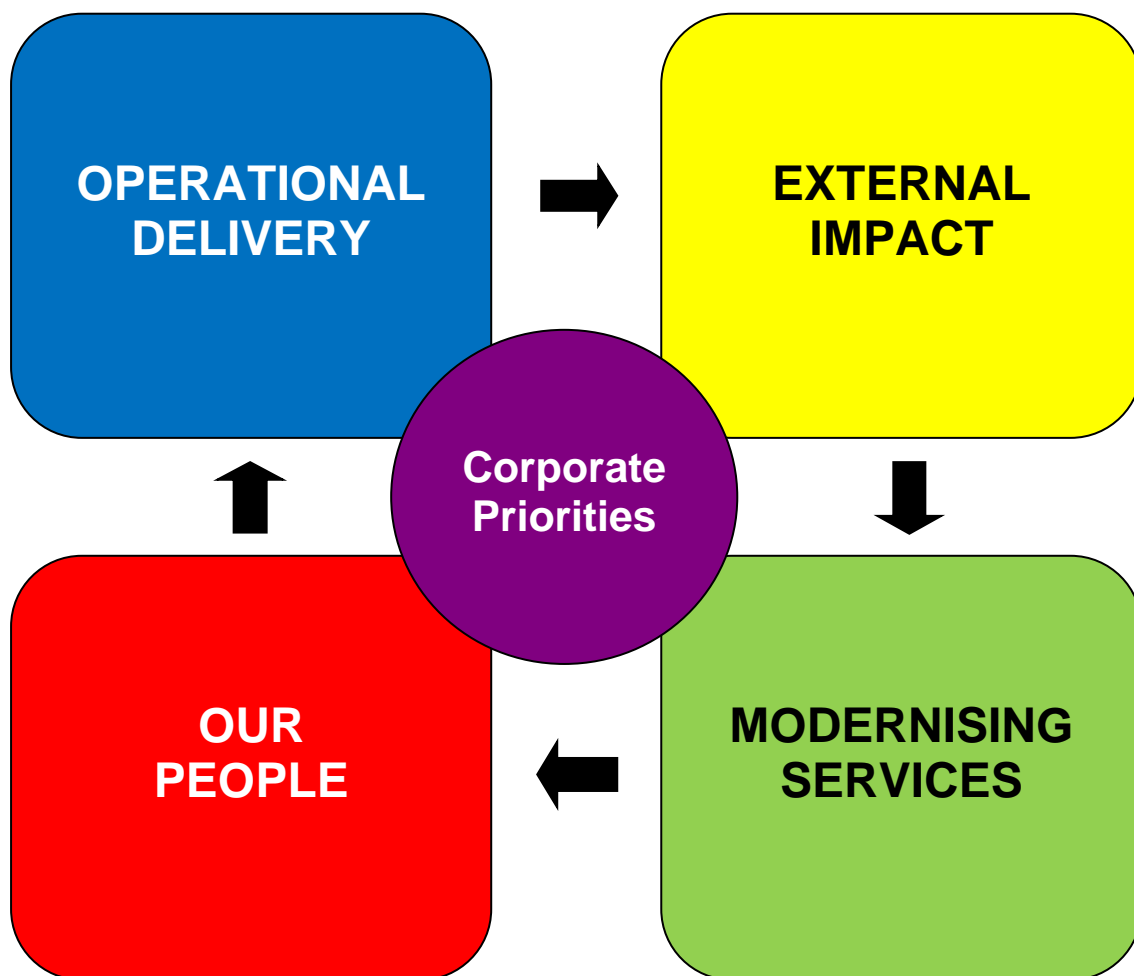


# What We Plan to Achieve in 2023-24

Our Annual Business Plan for 2023-24 is in the form of a 'Balanced Scorecard'. This sets out the actions and initiatives we intend to take forward as the focus of our work programme over the next 12 months, in support of delivering our business priorities and associated outcomes.

Our Scorecard is based around four areas:

- **Operational delivery** (for example, maintaining or improving the standard of our casework and advocacy).
- **External impact** (for example, the delivery of victim and witness services).
- **Modernising services** (for example, greater use of digital / IT processes).
- **Our people** (for example, supporting staff engagement and well-being).



2023-24 Scorecard Areas

## Operational Delivery

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 1: Supporting a safer community by providing an effective and high quality prosecution service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of action plans in response to Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland recommendations and ongoing monitoring of agreed action plan objectives.</li> <li>• Development of legal policy and guidance, including the publication of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Policy for Prosecuting Sexual Offences.</li> <li>○ Policy for Prosecuting Cases involving Domestic Abuse.</li> <li>○ Policy for Prosecuting Cases involving Stalking (for Consultation).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agreement of a joint Sexual Offences Strategy with police, including the development of a suite of joint performance measures.</li> <li>• Delivery of the PPS Quality Assurance Review Programme, including the assessment of casework against the Service's Prosecution Quality Standards (PQS) via monthly dip sampling.</li> <li>• Agreement of arrangements with any new institutions established to investigate legacy cases.</li> <li>• We will work with CJSNI partners to implement:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The agreed recommendations of the Independent Review of Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland.</li> <li>○ The remaining recommendations arising from the Gillen Review, including the phased expansion of Remote Evidence Centres (RECs).</li> <li>○ The new offences under the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, for example in respect of non-fatal strangulation or asphyxiation and voyeurism.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



**External Impact**

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 2: Building confidence in the independence, fairness and effectiveness of the Service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the PPS Communications Strategy and agreed objectives for 2023-24.</li> <li>• Publication of Official Statistics and performance data in line with the agreed schedule, including statistical bulletins on hate crime, sexual offences and a new publication reporting on performance in cases involving domestic violence and abuse.</li> <li>• Management of complaints and requests for review, identifying learning to inform improved services and processes for victims and witnesses and other service users.</li> <li>• Publication of the Annual Report of the Independent Assessor of Complaints for 2022-23 and the implementation of agreed actions.</li> <li>• Achievement of action plan objectives for 2023-24 in support of the PPS Equality Scheme and Disability Discrimination Act.</li> </ul>

**External Impact**

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 3: Meeting the needs of victims and witnesses</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with CJSNI partners to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Deliver agreed objectives set out in the CJSNI’s Victim and Witness Strategy, including the development of mechanisms to monitor how well we are delivering the rights and entitlements as laid out in the Victim and Witness Charters.</li> <li>○ Support the Victim and Witness Steering Group in identifying and responding to emerging issues and the delivery of improved outcomes for victims and witnesses.</li> <li>○ Provide continued support for the Registered Intermediaries Scheme.</li> <li>○ Provide appropriate support for the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy led by the Department of Health and the Department of Justice and the ‘Equally Safe’ Strategy, led by the Executive Office.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure effective consultation and engagement with stakeholders via the PPS Stakeholder Engagement Forum (SEF).</li> </ul>

**Modernising Services**

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 4: Strengthening our capability by continuously improving the way we work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the 'PPS 2030' programme, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establishment of the PPS Modernisation Team.</li> <li>○ Internal and external stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>○ Identification of potential projects to be taken forward during year 1 of the Programme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We will work with PSNI to establish the new Working Together Programme and progress agreed action plan objectives in respect of the main project themes, including file quality and delay, reducing demand, disclosure improvement and modernisation and transformation.</li> <li>• Delivery of key operational PPS projects and inter-agency initiatives under the CJSNI Speeding Up Justice Programme, including the achievement of project objectives in respect of Direct Committal.</li> <li>• We will engage with the Youth Justice Agency and police to progress a new early intervention process in youth cases, including the framework for an operational pilot (Southern Region).</li> </ul>

**Modernising Services**

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 4: Strengthening our capability by continuously improving the way we work (continued)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CJSNI Digital Strategy: Completion of Phase Three of the Digital Evidence Management Project (sharing of digital material with the defence).</li> <li>• Implementation of PPS ICT Strategy objectives for 2023-24, including development support for CJSNI initiatives and enhancements to the PPS Case Management System.</li> <li>• We will work with CJSNI partners on agreed Covid-19 ‘Recovering the Justice System’ initiatives and the ongoing development and delivery of operational recovery plans on a cross-agency basis.</li> <li>• We will continue to work with the Department of Justice in the development of a revised Prosecution Fee Scheme.</li> </ul>

**Our People**

Priority	Initiatives and actions
<p><b>Priority 5: Supporting and empowering our people</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of agreed PPS People Plan objectives for 2023-24 across the six People Priorities:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Improvement of internal communication.</li> <li>(2) Strategic workforce planning and timely, responsive vacancy management and supply.</li> <li>(3) More flexible and innovative ways of working.</li> <li>(4) Review of the performance management system.</li> <li>(5) Improved focus on both the physical and mental wellbeing of staff.</li> <li>(6) Improvement and development of leadership skills.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Ongoing evaluation of 'New Ways of Working' and the NICS Hybrid Working Policy.</li> <li>• Development of a response to the Investors in People assessment following reaccreditation (24 month checkpoint review).</li> <li>• Implementation of PPS Corporate Social Responsibility and well-being objectives for 2023-24.</li> <li>• Delivery of the Annual Corporate Training Plan.</li> <li>• Maintenance of effective employee relations within the PPS.</li> <li>• Implementation of the Health and Safety Work Programme for 2023-24.</li> </ul>

## Key Delivery Measures

The following are the key delivery measures for 2023-24 against which the performance of the PPS will be assessed. Performance against these measures will be accounted for in our Annual Report for the coming financial year.

### Priority 1:

**Supporting a safer community by providing an effective and high quality prosecution service**

- **Casework Quality Assurance (Dip sampling)**
  - Percentage of prosecution decisions taken in accordance with the Code for Prosecutors.
- **Unsuccessful outcomes**
  - Number of No Bills granted in the Crown Court.
  - Number of Acquittals by Direction in the Crown Court.

### Priority 2:

**Building confidence in the independence, fairness and effectiveness of the Service**

- **Criminal Justice Inspection**
  - Monitoring of agreed recommendations (i.e. assessed as achieved / partially achieved / not achieved).
- **Public confidence (NI Life and Times Survey)**
  - Percentage public confidence in the provision of a fair and impartial prosecution service.
  - Percentage who feel the PPS is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime.
- **Complaints**
  - Number of complaints by type of issue raised.
  - Percentage of complaints (a) acknowledged within 3 working days (b) dealt with within 30 working days.
- **Requests for a review of a decision not to prosecute**
  - Percentage of requests (a) acknowledged within 3 working days (b) dealt with within 8 weeks.

## Key Delivery Measures

### Priority 3: Meeting the needs of victims and witnesses

- **Northern Ireland Victim and Witness Survey**
  - Percentage victim and witness satisfaction with the services delivered by the VWCU.
- **Delivery against Victim and Witness Charter Commitments (VWCU)**
  - Percentage of notifications to the victim within 7 days of decision.
  - Percentage of notifications of file submission within 7 days of receipt.
  - Percentage of notifications of arraignment within 7 days of scheduling.
- **Special Measures**
  - Number of special measures applications applied for / percentage granted.

### Priority 4: Strengthening our capability by continuously improving the way we work

- **Review of charges**
  - Percentage of 28 day charge cases where charge sheets are reviewed within at least 3 working days of first appearance.
- **Timeliness of decisions issued (Regions / Serious Crime Unit)**
  - Median time taken for issue of decisions by type of decision.
- **Decision information requests (DIRs) to Police**
  - Percentage of indictable / summary decisions where a DIR was required.

### Priority 5: Supporting and empowering our people

- **Staff satisfaction**
  - Percentage of staff who agree that the PPS is a good organisation to work for.
  - PPS Employee Engagement Index (%).
- **Performance management**
  - Percentage of staff with an agreed Personal Performance Agreement by the agreed target date.
  - Percentage of end of year Performance Management Reports completed by the agreed target date.
- **Training**
  - Number of agreed training events delivered.

## PPS Resources

The Service has been provided with an allocation for the 2023-24 financial year of £36.2m resource, £4.5m non-cash, and £0.4m capital. It is anticipated that further funding will be made available as part of the June technical exercise in respect of Covid recovery from DoJ, and a few smaller allocations from other funding streams such as Tackling Paramilitarism and Fresh Start.

Details of the allocation are set out below.

Draft Budget Outcome	£m
Opening Resource baseline	36.2
Anticipated Recovery Funding	1.2
Other Anticipated Funding	0.6
<b>Total Resource Funding</b>	<b>38.0</b>

Opening Capital baseline	0.4
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>0.4</b>

This proposed baseline budget is currently split across the Service's spending priorities as follows:

Spending Area	£m
Staffing	26.8
Legal and Court Costs (including Counsel Fees)	6.1
Accommodation, IT and Other Costs	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.0</b>



## Managing Risk

**The PPS faces a range of risks and uncertainties in delivering its priorities and objectives over the next year. The identification and review of corporate risks is the responsibility of the Management Board. All corporate risks are owned by members of the Board and will be actively managed over the course of the financial year.**

The corporate risk areas identified at the beginning of the 2023-24 financial year include the following:

### **Priority 1: Supporting a safer community**

- Impact of funding pressures in respect of addressing current caseloads and delivery against agreed Covid recovery targets.
- The Service's capacity to deliver legacy casework within the available resources.
- Management of serious and high-profile cases, including the disclosure regime.

### **Priority 2: Building confidence**

### **Priority 3: Meeting the needs of victims and witnesses**

- Our approach to stakeholder and public engagement.

### **Priority 4: Strengthening our capability**

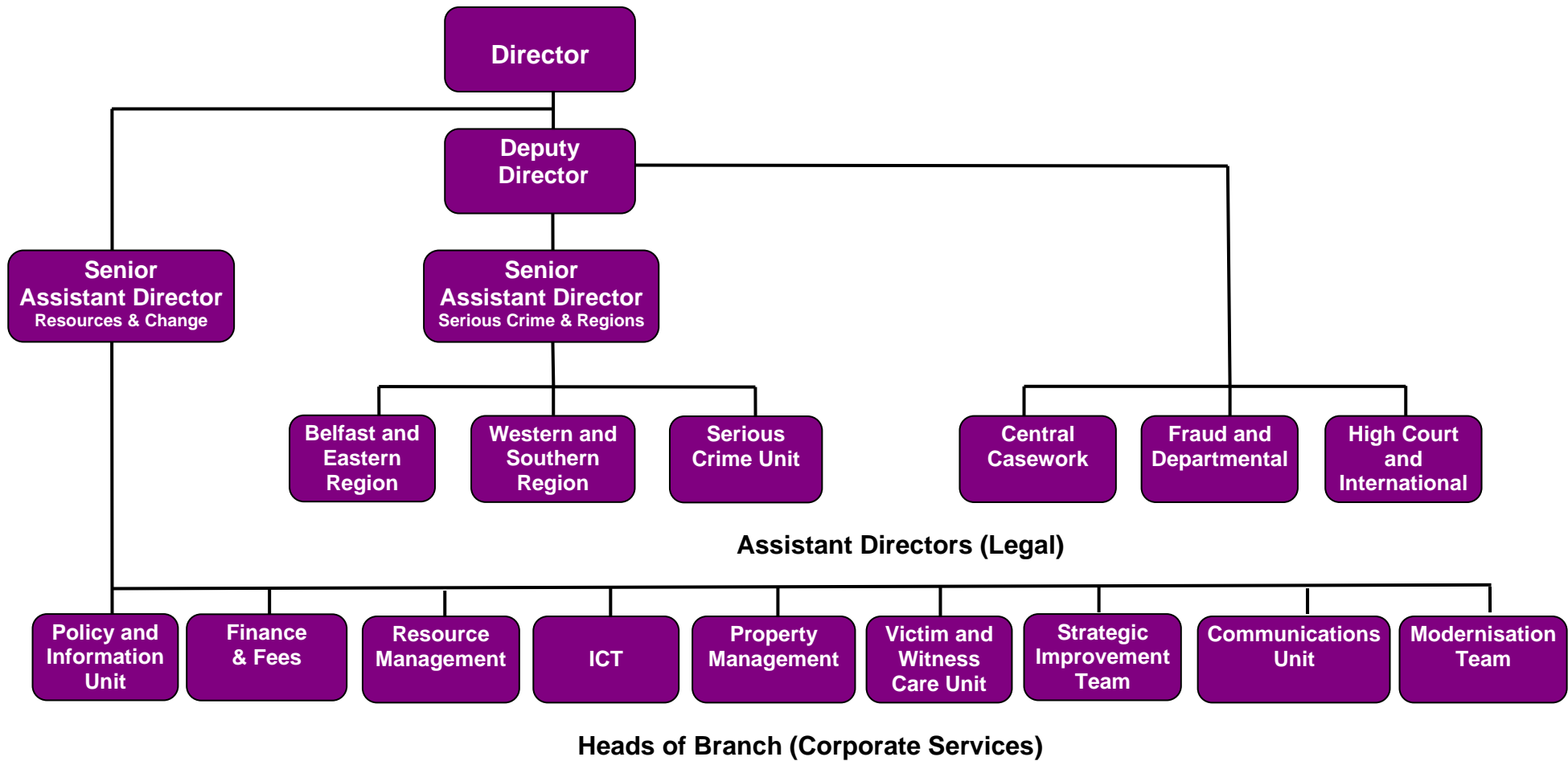
- The competing demands on PPS resources and the potential impact on the delivery of agreed CJSNI initiatives and anticipated reductions in avoidable delay.
- Compliance of PPS systems and procedures with information management and security requirements.
- The impact of a confirmed Covid-19 outbreak in respect of business continuity, organisational performance and service delivery.

### **Priority 5: Supporting and empowering our people**

- Delivery of the PPS People Plan.

- New Ways of Working and the effective implementation of hybrid working arrangements.
- Workforce planning and the retention and recruitment of staff.

# Annex A: PPS Organisation Chart (June 2023)





**Public  
Prosecution  
Service**

Independent  
Fair  
Effective

## Contact Us

**If you require any further information about the PPS, or a copy of this document in an alternative format, please contact:**

**Policy and Information Unit  
Public Prosecution Service  
Belfast Chambers  
93 Chichester Street  
Belfast BT1 3JR**

**Tel: (028) 90 897100**

**Deaf/Hard of hearing (SMS): 07795 675528**

**Fax: (028) 90 897030**

**Email: [info@ppsni.gov.uk](mailto:info@ppsni.gov.uk)**

**Website: [www.ppsni.gov.uk](http://www.ppsni.gov.uk)**

**Published June 2023**